

In the Claims

Claims 1 to 10 (cancelled)

Claims 11 to 19 (withdrawn)

20. (currently amended) In combination,

a preparatory machine for sequentially delivering wound laps, each wound lap having a longitudinal axis;

a conveying belt disposed transversely of said preparatory machine for sequentially receiving the delivered wound laps;

means for driving said conveyor belt in stepwise manner; and

means located between said preparatory machine and said conveyor belt for sequentially rotating each wound lap ~~at least 90°~~ 180° in a plane of said longitudinal axis thereof and conveying each wound lap from said preparatory machine onto said conveyor in coaxially equi-spaced apart relation.

21.(currently amended) A method of conveying wound laps comprising the steps of producing a series of wound laps in a winding station, each of said laps having a web wound onto a tube about a longitudinal axis of the tube;

delivering each wound lap successively from said winding station onto a conveyor belt extending in a direction parallel to said axis;

sequentially rotating each wound lap delivered to said conveyor belt 180° to reverse a winding off direction of the web on the tube thereof;

thereafter driving said conveyor in stepwise manner to space ~~spacing~~ the wound laps delivered to said conveyor belt in equi-spaced relation along said conveyor belt; and

conveying the wound laps on said conveyor belt in stepwise manner longitudinally of said axis to a series of combing machines.

22.(previously added) A method as set forth in claim 21 wherein each wound lap is moved transversely of said axis before and after said step of rotating said wound lap.

23.(previously added) A method as set forth in claim 21 wherein each said wound lap is lifted from said conveyor belt prior to said step of rotating said wound lap and deposited onto said conveyor belt after said step of rotation.

24.(currently amended) An apparatus comprising
a conveyor belt for receiving a series of wound laps in equi-spaced relation for intermittent travel along a common longitudinal axis, each of said wound laps having a tube disposed in parallel to said common longitudinal axis;

means for driving said conveyor belt in stepwise manner;

a rotatable shaft disposed perpendicularly of said conveyor belt at one end of said conveyor belt; and

at least two receiving means mounted on opposite sides of said shaft, each said receiving means being positioned to engage within said tube of a wound lap delivered to said conveyor belt and to rotate the engaged wound lap at least 90° onto said conveyor belt in response to rotation of said shaft.

25.(cancelled)

26.(previously added) An apparatus as set forth in claim 24 for raising and lowering said shaft relative to said conveyor belt.

27.(previously added) An apparatus as set forth in claim 24 wherein the distance between said shaft and a wound lap to be rotated is equal to one-half the spacing between two adjacent wound laps on said conveyor belt.

28.(cancelled)

29.(previously added) An apparatus as set forth in claim 24 wherein each said receiving means has a non-slip surface to receive said tube of a wound lap thereon.

30.(cancelled)

31.(previously added) The combination as set forth in claim 20 wherein said means includes a rotatable shaft disposed perpendicularly of said conveying belt at one end of said conveying belt; and at least two receiving means mounted on opposite sides of said shaft, each said receiving means being positioned to engage a wound lap delivered to said conveying belt and to rotate the engaged wound lap at least 180° onto said conveying belt in response to rotation of said shaft.

32.(previously added) The combination as set forth in claim 31 further comprising a lifting device for raising and lowering said shaft relative to said conveyor belt.